DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 296 975 SP 030 374

TITLE Follow-Up of the In-Service Training Programme "An Upper Secondary School for All."
INSTITUTION National Swedish Board of Education, Stockholm.
PUB DATE May 88
NOTE 16p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT School Research Newsletter; May 1988

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Action Research; Educational Research; Feedback; Foreign Countries; *Improvement Programs; *Inservice Teacher Education; *Program Evaluation; *Secondary Education
IDENTIFIERS *Sweden

ABSTRACT

In this monograph, a description is given of the activities of the "An Upper Secondary School For All" (Swedish abbreviation: GFA) program which has been operating in Swedish schools during the 1980s. A discussion is presented on how a number of upper secondary schools are working on the complex problem of giving as many youngsters as possible meaningful upper secondary schooling. How the schools are organising their development work is described, and the importance of the GFA is discussed. The methods that county education committees and researchers are using to evaluate and provide the schools with feedback are described. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED296975

SCHOOL RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

MAY 1988 FIELD-TOPIC 1988:3
In-service training
Upper secondary school reform
Active supervision/evaluation

Current project

TITLE OF PROJECT: FOLLOW-UP OF THE IN-SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAMME »AN UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR ALL»

How are a number of upper secondary schools working on the p problem complex of giving as many youngsters as possible meaningful upper secondary schooling?
How are schools organising their development work? What is the importance of the in-service training programme? What methods are county education committees and researchers using to evaluate and to provide schools with feedback?

PROJECT IN PROGRESS AT:
Department of Education
University of Göteborg
Box 1010
S-431 26 MÖLNDAL
Tel: 031-67 90 00

SCIENTIFIC LEADER:
Rolf Lander

PROJECT LEADER:
Rolf Lander

PROJECT NO. :
3838a

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
K. Jansson
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SP030374

SWEDISH NATIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION

NEWSLETTER 1983 - 1988

1983:1 Evaluation of Courses of Study at Upper Secondary School (UTGY)
1983:2 The Research Programme of The National Swedish Board of Education
1983:3 Science Subjects - An Evaluation of Student Achivement and Attitudes in International Perspective (IEA Science II)
1983:4 Evaluation through follow-up of students (UGU)
1983:5 Analysis of teacher-directed experimentation

1984:1 Children with early perceptual funcional disturbances. A follow-up during school years
1984:2 The SIAu Project: Project description
1984:3 Transition from compulsory and upper secondary school to further education or employment - the GUARANTEE project
1984:4 Vertical integration at junior and intermediate levels
1984:5 Learning to read
1984:6 Family support and development - a longitudinal, ecological study of families with children of fre-school and junior-level age (the FAST-Project)
1984:7 Study assistance and adult study assistance - utilisation and effects
1984:8 UTRES - Evaluation of resource utilisation in upper secondary schools
1984:9 MEDIA PANEL

1985:1 Creativity and communication: music and art education - The KROK-project
1985:2 Childrenš participation at junior level
1985:3 Programme for recurrent educational situation reports: school description models
1985:4 Discovery learning and cognitive development - the UKU-project
1985:5 Man in a changing society - MIS
1985:6 Systematic evaluation of the "forest in schools" project
1985:7 Evaluation of experimental concentration of studies in upper secondary school
1985:8 Pupils´working environment at school in use (EMILIA)
1985:9 Immigrant pupils at the senior level of compulsory school and in the upper secondary school

1986:1 Education - Society; Curricular theory
1986:2 IEA Written composition study
1986:3 UTRES - Evaluation of resource utilisation in upper secondary school
1986:4 Technology and science in school and society: Education, training, subsequent training
1986:5 Historical image and historical awareness
1986:6 Political and citizenship education in Swedish schools in the 20th century (the role and concept formation of social subjects)
1986:7 Feasibility of joint studies in adult education
1986:8 Studies of the innovation process in compulsory school
1986:9 Girls in science and technology
1986:10 Evaluation trough pupil follow-up - the UGU project

1987:1 Young people and peace - prerequisites for peaceoriented istruction
1987:2 Functional opportunities of the school administration in municipalities with local agencies and free municipality experiments
1987:3 Steering strategies in a decentralised decitionmaking system
1987:4 The outward efficiency of schools
1987:5 Swedish in upper secondary school - two worlds?

1988:1 META STUDIES
1988:2 Pupils´ frames of reference and the content of teaching

In-service training programmes and central development work

"An upper secondary school for all" (Swedish abbreviation: GFA) is the title of an in-service training programme which has been operating in Swedish schools during the 1980s. Today the expression also summarises one of the aims of the experimental activities in progress to give upper secondary schools a new curriculum. This, at all events, is the general interpretation which has been put on the Government Bill (Prop. 1983/94:116) passed by the Riksdag.

The aim of the in-service training is to make schools better equipped for dealing with the problems which arise with a progressively larger proportion of youngsters entering upper secondary school. This means a growth in the percentage of school-fatigued youngsters with inadequate entrance qualifications. The background, of course, is that employment opportunities for unskilled youngsters have steadily deteriorated.

In-service training courses have been organised all over the country. By 1985 the in-service training had reached about three-quarters of Sweden's upper secondary schools. This means that "course leader teams" of at least three persons per school had gathered for between two and four days to discuss curricular objectives, pupils with difficulties, social changes and the demands they make on upper secondary school, changes in compulsory school, resource utilisation in schools, local development work etc. The aim was for the course leader team to undertake to provide training of similar content for staff at their own schools and for this in turn to encourage development work. There was in-service training material intended for the personnel training and there was a model intended for a small group comprising about 15 persons. Some schools, however, had organised the training for all staff members.

The in-service training programme began in the In-service Training Department of the Mölndal School of Education in the 1980/81 academic year. After two years, responsibility was taken over by the Upper Secondary Schools Department of the National Board of Education. The in-service training courses were offered with the county education committees as formal mandators and funding agencies. In-service training material was produced and developed (information on this point is obtainable from

the Upper Secondary Schools Department of the National Board of Education, tel. 08-783 20 00).

Between 1985/86 and 1987/88, activities were organised at central level as a joint project undertaken by the NBE and six county education committees. They were funded as central development work. During these three years, researchers were brought in on the work of the joint group.

The following account describes the co-operation established between the researchers and the joint group.

> For the committee's part, this has involved follow-up work focusing on a number of schools which took part in the in-service training and related it to their own development work. The follow-up included elements of both evaluation and consultation.
>
> To the researchers, this meant constructing follow-up instruments and furnishing guidance on the same, as well as analysing the reports by the county education committees on their inputs. During the past year this has also involved the researchers conducting surveys of their own at the schools concerned.
>
> The aggregate input could be termed action research.

The Counties of Gävleborg, Kalmar, Kopparberg, Stockholm and Västerbotten are represented in the joint group. The County of Halland was previously taking part but was replaced in 1986 by the County of Kristianstad. All of these counties, except the last mentioned, include the schools which were involved in and took part in the follow-up by the county education committees and researchers. The number of schools varied between 8 and 12 per county.

> From the viewpoint of the schools this meant, on four occasions in the course of three school years, mobilising groups and individuals from staff and pupils who made themselves available for interviews and talks. On three occasions the schools supplied information about themselves, on one occasion they received viewpoints from the county education committees on their experimental activities. Representa-

tives of the schools have also taken part in conferences on the in-service training activities.

Cognitive focus of the action research

Research is aimed at influencing our cognitive image of a particular phenomenon. And the more applied the nature of the research, the more important it is to influence the implements or skills that are needed in order to process the phenomenon under consideration.

Action research, characteristically, takes as its starting point common problems of the researcher and of the people who need the research and with whom the researcher is co-operating.

In addition, an attempt is made to achieve knowledge through at least some degree of common action. In the present instance, as we have already seen, this applied to the researchers on the one hand and, on the other, the central joint group comprising representatives of county education committees and the NBE.

In other research, the researcher is usually given a remit defining the principal's needs and interests but leaving the researcher at liberty to work on his own questions and theories. The researcher does not take responsibility for the use made of the research findings, and the principal does not take responsibility for the way in which the cognitive image is built up.

What common problems and actions are involved here, and what cognitive interests underlie them?

Both parties are interested in seeing how schools work with the problem complex of giving all pupils a meaningful upper secondary schooling. Which solutions are being tested and which of them survive in the school environment? Which factors favour or oppose different solutions? What has been the importance of the in-service training programme among these factors?

The county education committees and the NBE are interested in being able to investigate for themselves questions of the above mentioned kind and, with the knowledge thus gained, being able to influence the work of schools. This is one aspect of the "active supervision" which the county education committees are required to exercise.

The researchers are interested in seeing how follow-up methodology can be adapted to the work of the school administration. Qualitative improvement of cognitive production within the school administration is also vitally important as regards the access of research to data and as regards understanding of research methods generally.

Action research usually employs express valuative premises which are shared by the parties. The researchers and their associates in the central joint group, however, have not attempted any close rapprochement in valuative terms, because this would not be functional in the context of State activities. The conceptual and evaluative frames of co-operation are wide enough for the parliamentary majority to be amply accommodated within them and the members of the joint group worked on their official responsibility.

The follow-up strategy in brief

When the present researchers were called in by the joint group, the latter had conducted interviews in twelve schools where staff training had been undertaken in 1983/84. The sampling procedure was for each county education committee represented in the joint group to undertake to interest two schools in its county. Schools were wanted which were believed to have made different amounts of progress with the development work in question. One school fairly well to the fore and another exhibiting the normal rate of progress for upper secondary schools. Both of them were to be public sector schools.

How did the GFA in-service training land in schools?

A picture was wanted of the way in which the staff training had been received. Five groups were interviewed. The course leader team, head teachers, union representatives, participants in the staff training and staff members who had not taken part in the

training. The sample of persons in the last two groups (three each) was too small to convey a representative picture of the state of opinion in schools. On the other hand we may believe that the opinions voiced by the staff are fairly well represented through the general pattern of interviews. The results were summarised by Dahlgren (1985).

What GFA projects did schools acquire?

The county education committees paid their next visits to schools - now ten in number - in the spring of 1986. This time the task was to chart the development work, in project form, which had been launched or encouraged as a result of the staff training.

Advice to projects and school management

In the autumn of 1986, participants returned to their several schools and tried to contribute to the development work through viewpoints based above all on the interviews conducted during the spring.

The interviews, together with reflection records from the feedback, provided input documentation for another report by the researchers (Lander & Nylén, 1987), summarising the assessments which the central working party based primarily on the project participants' stories and reflections. The report also includes the researchers' analysis of the structure and content of the in-service programme and the theoretical prospects of its having an impact on schools.

School as an environment for GFA-type development work?

At present (1987/88) the researchers (Andersson & Lander) are analysing their own investigations in eight of the original twelve schools. The aim here is to transcend the project and also to capture characteristic features of school organisation. The projects, in other words, are to be appraised in

relation to the environment where they occurred and continued for a number of years.

The most important outlying factor in all the school investigations mentioned here is the limited time which was available. Within the development project we have tried to adjust to the conditions of school administration. Accordingly, no field studies have involved more than about three days' work by two people, i.e. six Mondays. To this is added time for data processing and report preparation at the county education committees and, moreover, the researchers' syntheses of the committees' reports.

The joint group's representatives have also tried to summarise their experience of national guidelines and support for development work in keeping with Government Bill Prop. 1983/84:116. An effort is being made to assess the workings of different strategies in a county perspective.

Relevance to "An upper secondary school for all"

In the experience of the course leader team, the climate for staff training in schools during 1985 was an austere one. The majority complied with the model of a general information day for everybody, after which they relied on spontaneous recruitment for the actual training. Recruitment was slow in several cases.

In his summary, Dahlgren (op. cit. chap. 11) draws the conclusion that the course leader training in itself did not guarantee that all the trainees would be capable of propagating the INSET message in their own schools. Several of them felt in great need of support from an outsider, partly in the actual introduction of the INSET programme and also for launching development work.

During the interval between staff training and the visits by the county education committees (1-1.5 years), the group recruited for the staff training had often become established as a discussion group or as leaders of different projects. In most cases the group had also recruited additional interested members. Most of the staff in the schools are still frequently said to be uninformed or uninterested. The attitude of head

teachers, however, appears in several cases to have changed from one of scepticism concerning the INSET programme to a conviction that the trained group can be used as a means of starting independent development work at school.

By the time of the second visit, in 1986, ten schools had acquired between two and six projects each with the aim of "an upper secondary school for all". Common projects were concerned with facilitating the transition between compulsory and upper secondary school (five schools) and modifying the work of the form teacher (four schools). Out of a total of 29 schools, three were concerned with directly influencing the school development function through development plans and through the direction of school work.

The project problem images and model solutions in each school have been analysed in Lander & Nylén (op. cit. chap. 8). That report inquires about the extent to which the model solutions focus on conditioning pupils with difficulties and on rectifying shortcomings of regular school activities which make things more difficult for such pupils. An inquiry is also made as to whether the emphasis is on segregation, i.e. special measures outside regular teaching for under-achieving pupils, or on integration, i.e. attempts to modify teaching so that the needs of weak pupils can be more easily responded to within it. A cross-tabulation indicates the following breakdown of schools:

	Integration	Segregation
Focus on pupils	2	2
Focus on schools	5	1

The problem analysis emerging in each school's project groups and school management has also been classified, to investigate the extent to which it tallies with the intentions of the central joint group as regards the objectives of the work.

The degree of correspondence varies in such a way that one school apparently does not have a problem image resembling that which the INSET programme tried to convey, while another has tried to make the GFS objectives the central point of wide-ranging development work. Between

these extremes we have a spectrum of other schools, showing different degrees of familiarity with analysing development requirements and different degrees of readiness to view reality and objectives in the same light as the INSET programme.

This classification can be termed an indication of the acceptance of the ideas of the INSET programme within 2-2.5 years by the groups in the different schools responsible for development work. Three of the ten schools have not achieved sufficient motivation, knowledge or active capacity to be able to implement the ideas of the INSET programme on a broad basis, while the others, to a greater or lesser degree, are heading in this direction.

Nobody in the central joint group, of course, supposes INSET or follow-up to be the sole or even the most important factor deciding whether goals and strategies concerning "an upper secondary school for all" are accepted, processed and generate new ideas in schools.

In a report from 1987 (Lander & Nylén, op. cit. chap. 1-2), the apparent theoretical possibilities are analysed of a programme of this type influencing the course participants and their schools. The mainstay of the model is the temporary detachment of people from everyday life so that they can discuss urgent questions and what to do about them. In a stimulating INSET context, one feels emotionally and opinion-wise freer and bolder than in the everyday run of things. One develops a feeling of common identity with team-mates from the same school. This fund of emotional energy and practical arguments must give the course participants the strength to inaugurate development work, which does not always go down very well with their colleagues. After a time, however, the seedlings must take root and, through their own successes, gather and retain energy. The INSET has only a temporary effect, and support from outside is still important.

The INSET programme and GFS-type development work in the schools received important support of this kind when the Government Bill on the reforming processes enhanced the political legitimacy of the objectives. And entry into the FS-experiments of the reforming process opened up additional

opportunities of project finance, over and above municipal and State grants for regular local development work (LUVA).

At the same time as the GFA work was supported by the reform of upper secondary school, INSET for its part helped to prepare many schools in Sweden to tackle discussions on aims and the planning of development work in the spirit of the reform.

Relevance to active supervision

The active supervision of Swedish schools by the county education committees naturally requires a variety of methods, depending on the different purposes involved. Methods tested in the course of this development work are among other things intended to supplement discussions and experiments.

The methods used in describing school development work during 1986 were aimed at giving the county education committees:

(1) A rough structure for the planning of interviews and reports on different projects, and

(2) Input documentation for appraising the connection between the project group's problem perception, intentions and model solution.

The rough structure comprised the following categories: the project problem image (acute questions and problems and, secondly, more fundamental causes and conditions), its model solution and the process anticipated in connection with the same, the view of obstacles to the process, and anticipated effects.

Assessment of the coherence of internal project work was governed by such questions as: How well do project inputs (model solution and other measures) tackle the problems to be dealt with? Are they plausible, too extensive, too limited? How thorough is the project participants' problem perception? Does it need to be supplemented or altered in any way to provide a better basis for action or more reasonable expectations? How firmly rooted do the project inputs and problem perception appear to be

within the project? Is this clearly perceived by most of the participants? Are they agreed on the main outlines?

The aim was to achieve integral, general pictures of the projects in keeping with a common pattern making it possible for different projects to be compared with each other.

The methods of feedback to project participants and school managements included:

(1) A prediction of school development work in a GFA perspective. The county education committees' representatives, in other words, were to make qualified guesses about the risks and opportunities of the projects, based on their knowledge of them. Viewpoints or recommendations intended for feedback to the schools were based on this prediction.

(2) Practice with a view to conducting the feedback by word of mouth and/or in writing.

(3) A structure for reflective records of the feedback occasion and subsequent contacts with the school.

The researchers' summary and synthesis of the committee representatives' documentation also includes methodological aspects which can be generalised to apply to the corresponding situations in the regular work of the school administration.

The school visits in 1987/88 are being conducted by the researchers themselves, partly because it may be of particular value for the work of schools to be scrutinised by two partly independent parties, and also because - the researchers' experience of this methodology being confined to compulsory school - they wanted to test it on upper secondary schools in an initial stage.

The compulsory school survey referred to is called "The Situation Appraisal Project" and has been reported in Ekholm, Fransson & Lander (1987). It was conducted between 1980 and 1985 in 35 compulsory schools,

with situation observers from county education committees and State personnel training programmes in the school sector.

Our appraisal of the situation in upper secondary schools differs from the study of compulsory schools, partly because it particularly emphasises individual development projects. Efforts are made to judge the effects which the projects have had on school activities. One common feature is that a study is made of the "development function" in the schools, i.e. their ability to concentrate their efforts on certain development needs and to achieve solutions satisfying those needs.

REFERENCES

Dahlgren, H.: Gymnasieskolan - en skola för alla. Fortbildning och utvecklingsarbete - en uppföljning. Delrapport 1. Rapport från institutionen för pedagogik. Göteborgs universitet 1985:21. (Upper secondary school - a school for all. INSET and development work - a follow-up. Interim report 1.). (In Swedish)

Ekholm, M., Fransson, A. & Lander, R.: Skolreform och lokalt gensvar. Utvärdering av 35 grundskolor genom upprepade lägesbedömningar 1980-1985. Publikation från institutionen för pedagogik. Göteborgs universitet 1987:3. (School reform and local responsibility. Evaluation of 35 compulsory schools through repeated situation appraisals, 1980-1985.) (In Swedish)

Lander, R. & Nylén, C.: 10 skolors arbete med "En gymnasieskola för alla". Publikation från institutionen för pedagogik, Göteborgs universitet 1987:1. (Work by ten schools on "An upper secondary school for all".) (In Swedish).

SCHOOL RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

School Research Newsletter contains reviews of current and terminated research within the field of education.

School Research Newsletter is published and distributed in an edition of 600 issues ten times per year. The Newsletter is obtained free of charge.

Published by Swedish National Board of Education,
Department for Coordination and Planning.
S-106 42 Stockholm. Telephone +46 8 783 20 00
Responsible Editor: Inger Marklund. Editor: Gunilla Karlsson
ISSN 0345-5343